

## Tonsillectomy (adults)

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During this surgery both of your tonsils and possibly adenoids will be removed. For a healthy recovery after surgery, please follow these instructions.

### What do I do when I get home?

#### Pain medication

- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 hours as needed. The usual dose is 325 mg to 650 mg every 4 hours. Acetaminophen is in a few medications that you may be taking for pain such as:
  - Plain Tylenol
  - Tylenol 1,2,3,4
  - Extra Strength Tylenol
  - Percocet
- **Do not take more than 4000 mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours.**
- If needed, take Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) for moderate or severe pain. This can be taken in addition to acetaminophen. The usual dose of Ibuprofen is 400 mg every 6 hours.
- **Do not take more than 1200 mg in 24 hours.**

Your surgeon may give you other prescription pain medication. Many medications, vitamins and supplements can cause bleeding. Do not take aspirin, or any other pain medications, supplements and vitamins unless prescribed by your surgeon.

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**Drinking fluids and eating**

- It is important that you are well hydrated. This means that you need to drink enough fluids. If you find it hard to drink, keep trying with a few sips every few minutes. Have plenty of freezies, popsicles or soups available.
- If it hurts to drink, take your pain medication, wait 20 to 30 minutes and then try to drink more fluids.
- Eat and drink what you wish. You may prefer eating soft food and food that is cold or not very hot. You may drink directly from a cup or use a straw.

**Activity**

- Rest for the remainder of the day.
- Return to work when you feel well, usually in 1 to 2 weeks.
- Do not exercise or travel a long way for 2 weeks after surgery.

**CPAP**

- If you have obstructive sleep apnea and use CPAP, please speak with your surgeon about how to use it after surgery.

**What is normal after surgery?****Pain**

- You will have pain and discomfort for about 2 weeks after surgery.
  - This can include ear, throat and jaw pain.
  - Sometimes, the pain is most severe between 3 to 7 days after surgery.
  - It is normal for the area where the tonsils were removed to be grey or whitish for 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. The surrounding area may look red. These are not usually signs that you have an infection.
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**Mouth area**

- It is normal for the uvula at the back of the throat to be swollen. The uvula is the tissue that hangs from the roof of your mouth at the back of the throat.
- It is normal for the area where the tonsils were removed to be grey or whitish for 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. The surrounding area may look red. These are not usually signs that you have an infection.
- It is common to have bad breath while your throat heals. It can help to brush your teeth and rinse your mouth with saline (1 tsp of salt per cup of warm water). Antibiotics are usually not needed after tonsillectomy.

**Nose area (if adenoids were removed)**

- You may have a lot of nasal mucus for 1 to 2 weeks.
- Using a nasal saline spray 3 or 4 times a day will help clear the nose of mucus and should be used for about 2 weeks after surgery. Please ask your pharmacist about using a saline nasal spray.

**Who can I call if I have questions?**

- Usually there is no follow-up appointment needed with the surgeon.
- If you have any questions, please contact your surgeon's office.
- For urgent questions after hours, please call the Otolaryngologist – Head & Neck (ENT) surgeon on call at 905-521-5030.

## When do I need to get medical help?

**Go to the Emergency Department if any of the following happen:**

- There is blood coming from your nose or mouth.
- Vomiting blood which may be red or brown.
- You cannot drink fluids due to severe pain (not sufficiently relieved by pain medication).
- You are passing less urine than usual (not peeing) or you vomit more than 2 times. You may be dehydrated.
- You have a fever of 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher.
- You have difficulty breathing.